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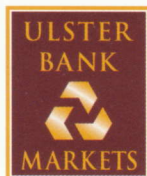
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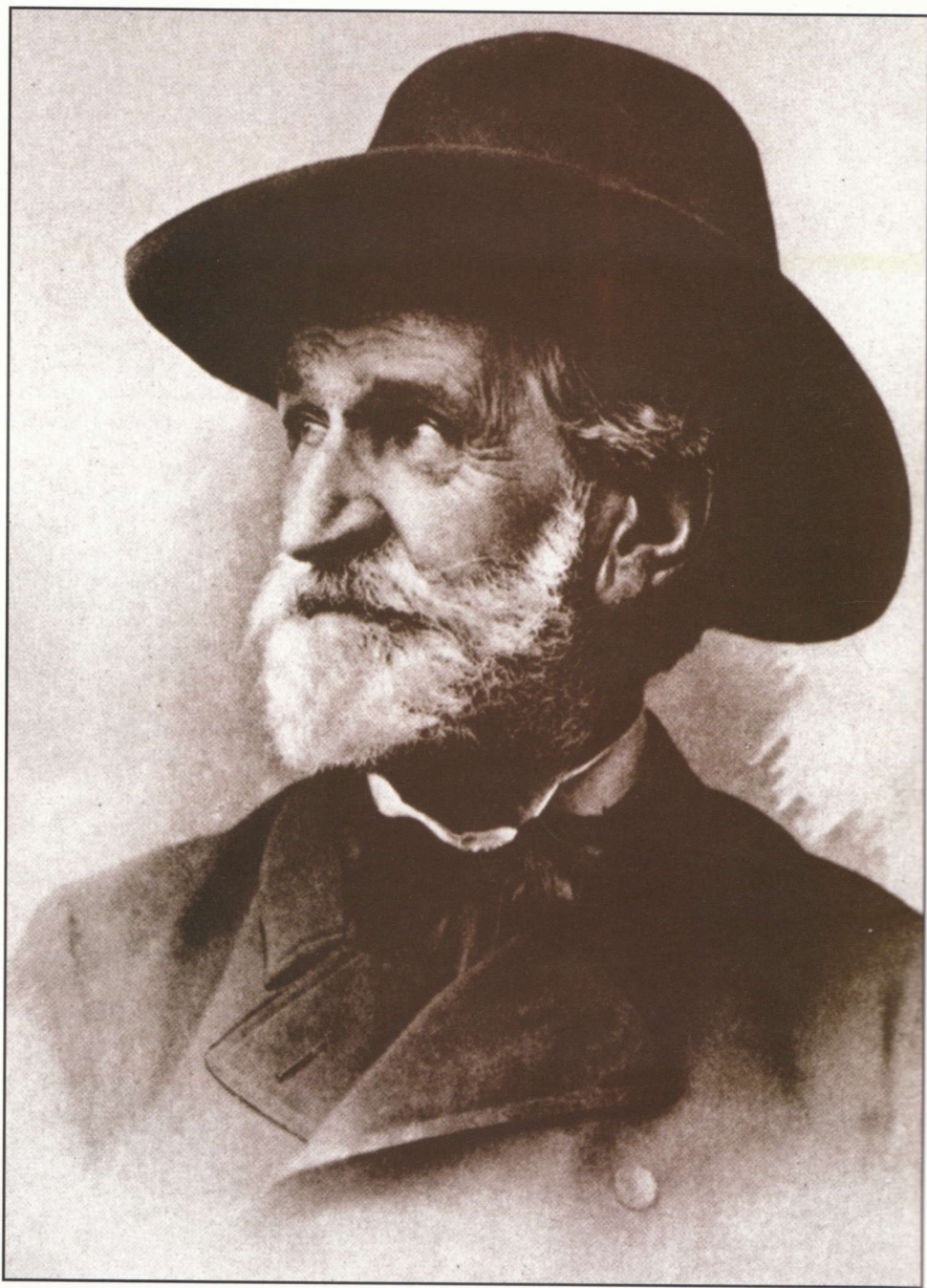


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# AIDA

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<i>Director</i>	Dieter Kaegi
<i>Designer</i>	Bruno Schwengl
<i>Choreographer</i>	Liz Roche
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There will be a 20-minute interval after Act 2

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# AIDA

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Radames, <i>Captain of the Guard</i>	Emil Ivanov
Amneris, <i>Princess of Egypt</i>	Patricia Spence
Aida, <i>an Ethiopian girl</i>	Georgina Benza
Amonasro, <i>Aida's father, King of Ethiopia</i>	Marcel Vanaud
The King of Egypt	Jean-Jacques Cubaynes
High Priestess	Elizabeth Woods
Messenger	Kevin Ferguson
<i>Répétiteur</i>	Mairéad Hurley
<i>Stage Manager</i>	Paula Tierney
<i>ASM</i>	Casey Norton
<i>Student</i>	Emer Doyle

*Aida* was first performed at the Cairo Opera House on 24 December 1871. The first Irish performance was at the Gaiety Theatre on 13 November 1888. The first DGOS production was at the Gaiety Theatre on 4 December 1942.

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## THE IRISH TIMES

## Weekend

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GIUSEPPE VERDI

# AIDA

## THE PLOT AT A GLANCE

### Act 1

Radamès, a young army officer, is loved by two women. One is the King's daughter Amneris; the other is the Ethiopian girl Aida. When he is chosen to lead the Egyptian army against the invading Ethiopians, Aida is faced with a dilemma. Should she look forward to her lover's victorious return, or should she be dreading the prospect of defeat and humiliation for her father, the King of Ethiopia?

In a solemn ceremony, Radamès receives his sword of office from the High Priest, Ramphis.

### Act 2

While the army is away, Amneris confronts Aida and tricks her into admitting that she is in love with Radamès.

Radamès returns at the head of his victorious army. His request for leniency towards the captured Ethiopians, among whom is Aida's father, is granted. But he is horrified to find himself publicly awarded the hand of Amneris as the prize for his military success.

### Act 3

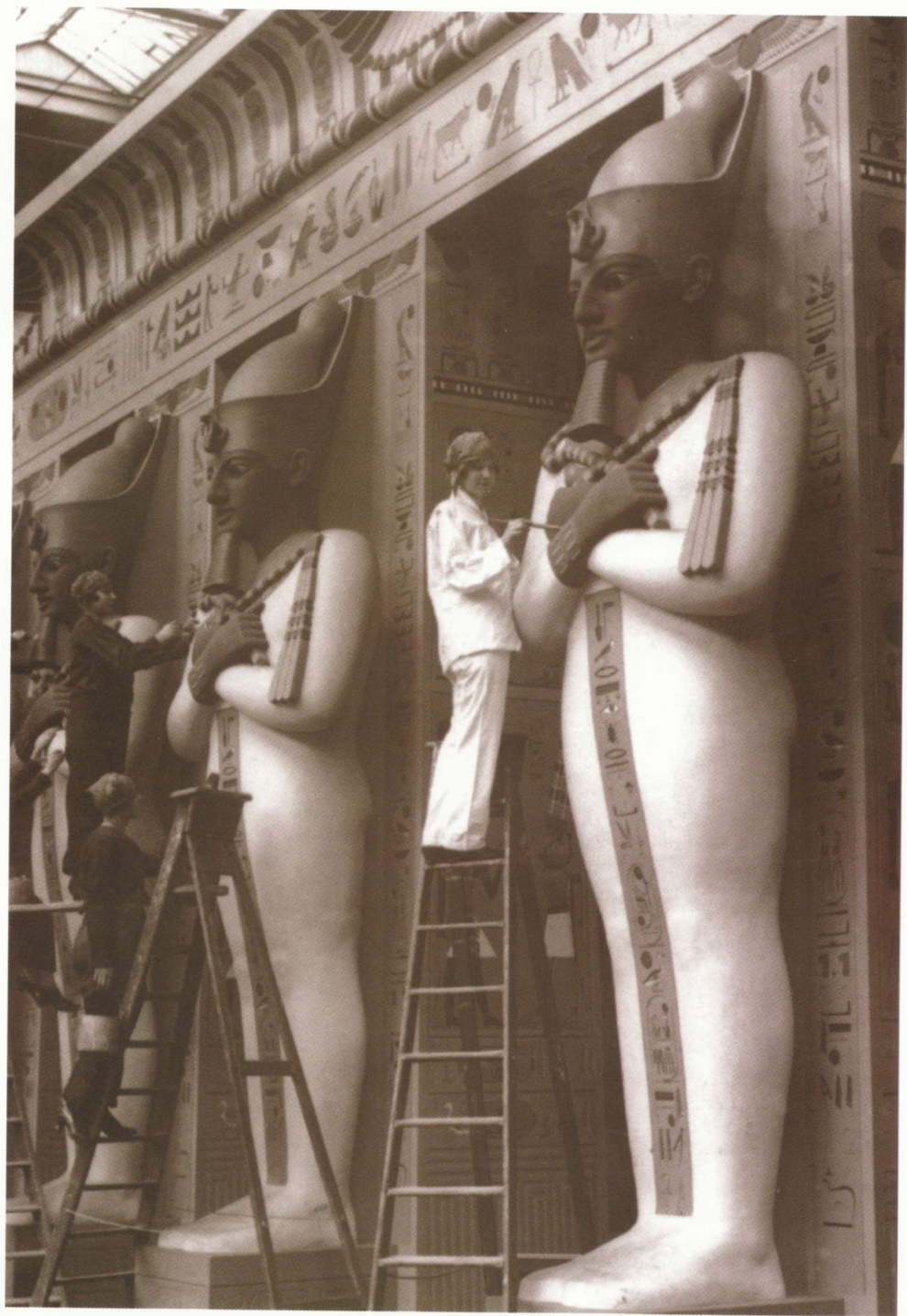
Aida is visited by her father Amonasro. He reminds her of her happy childhood back in the old country. Then he plays on her love for Radamès by asking her to obtain information about the movements of the Egyptian army. She recoils in horror, but when he accuses her of being a traitor to her country, she sadly agrees to do as he asks.

Radamès joins Aida and she pleads with him to flee with her. At first he hesitates; but his love for her weakens his resolve and he finally agrees. When he reveals details of his army's planned route, he is overheard by Amonasro. Realising he has betrayed his country, he surrenders to Ramphis.

### Act 4

Radamès is put on trial. Amneris offers to save him if he renounces his love for Aida. He refuses and is sentenced to be buried alive.

Unbeknownst to anyone, Aida has hidden herself in the tomb, and doesn't reveal her presence until the stone has been lowered. As the lovers unite in a final duet, we hear the chanting of the priests, and the anguished lament of the repentant Amneris.







## VERDI'S "EGYPTIAN BUSINESS"

"If anyone had said to me two years ago 'You are going to write an opera for Cairo', I'd have said he was mad – but now I see it's me who is mad ..."

You can look at *Aida* as an Egyptian opera, a French opera or an Italian opera. For most people, perhaps, it is the Egyptian aspect that predominates. *Aida* is the Grand Opéra of all Grand Opéras, the great operatic spectacular: tunes, choruses, trumpets; vast crowds, monumental sets; armies, temples, Egyptian priests, Ethiopian slaves, horses, camels, elephants – the lot. And all written, incredibly, to open the Suez Canal.

That, at least, is the legend. And it is true that, ever since the celebrations which surrounded the opening of the canal in 1860, the Khedive of Egypt had been anxious to secure Verdi's co-operation in writing a work especially for Cairo. But the draft of a letter written by Verdi's wife in August of that year makes it clear that the original request was for a 'hymn' and not for an opera, and that the occasion was to be the inauguration of the Cairo Opera House, built to celebrate the opening of the canal itself. In any case, Verdi refused and the Opera House

opened with *Rigoletto* on November 1, 1869. It was not till nearly three weeks later that a French ship, bearing the Empress Eugénie, steamed into Suez at the head of a cortège of sixty-eight vessels of various nationalities, and the canal was formally opened to traffic.

Nevertheless, the Khedive's hopes of getting an opera out of his favourite composer were by no means dashed, though, to begin with, he met with no more luck than any of the other friends, acquaintances and interested parties who, ever since *Don Carlos*, had been plying Verdi with suggestions for a new libretto. Chief among these was Camille Du Locle, the Director of the Paris Opéra-Comique, who now acted as intermediary in the Egyptian negotiations: to him wrote Mariette Bey, the great French Egyptologist and founder of the Cairo Museum, expressing the disappointment of the Khedive who 'was greatly vexed at the idea of giving up the collaboration of M. Verdi, whose talents he holds in immense esteem', and adding: 'A last word. If M. Verdi still does not accept, His Highness requests you try knocking at another door ... There are ideas of Gounod, even Wagner. If the latter would

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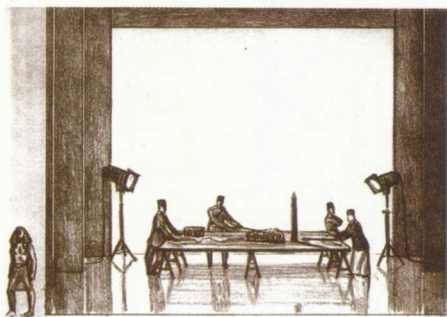
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do it he might produce something *grandiose*'. It is tempting to wonder whether the last phrase of this letter, which Du Locle astutely sent on to Verdi, may have had something to do with the composer's change of heart. But Du Locle enclosed at the same time a scenario of the proposed opera actually written by Mariette Bey (though at this stage, rather naively, Verdi was encouraged to believe that the Khedive himself had had a hand in it) – and in the end what undoubtedly drew Verdi's interest was, as always, the quality of the story itself.

The Egyptian aspect of the opera is one that has loomed very large in the development of the *Aida* legend, and indeed the popular idea of ancient Egypt is to a large extent encapsulated for us in this most successful of Verdi's works. Clearly the archaeological framework of the subject was one of the things which first tickled Verdi's imagination: it was something new, something different, which he felt would get him out of the rut of the usual operatic settings, and from the beginning he was much

concerned about the historical details of the scenario. He pestered his publisher, Giulio Ricordi, with demands for information – was ancient Egyptian worship reserved exclusively for men?; was Ethiopia the same as Abyssinia?; which of the Rameses might correspond to the King on the opera?; where and how were the mysteries of Isis celebrated? He extracted from a friend who had lived in Egypt three closely-written pages about the ancient Egyptian religion, its beliefs, prayers, music and dances, and through Du Locle kept closely in touch with Mariette Bey, to whose original scenic ideas he clung through all the changes in the text as being far more authentic than anything he or Ghislanzoni could think up. Mariette was helpful about the music too. The sacred dance, he wrote, was probably accompanied by a kind of chant, forming the bass to a very high chant above it which was executed by young sopranos: the instruments accompanying it would have been harps with twenty-four strings, double flutes, trumpets, drums, large castanets and cymbals. Verdi actually went to Florence to examine an Egyptian flute in the museum there – but was disappointed to find it was 'just a reed with holes in it, like our shepherds have'. And the details of staging and costumes were supervised by Mariette with scrupulous care: he even worried about the personal appearance of the Italian singers, and wrote to the Director of the Cairo



Opera. 'I really must speak to you seriously about this question of the actors and their moustaches and beards ... I know from experience that in Italy they don't trouble to get everything right, and in *Aida* it is absolutely essential that there are no beards or moustaches ... I consider this a matter of life and death for the opera'.

It is in the first two acts, with their religious and triumphal ceremonials, that the historical details are most in evidence, reaching a climax in the visual and musical splendours of the Triumph Scene, the biggest and best of many such scenes in nineteenth-century French and Italian opera. For Mariette, with his

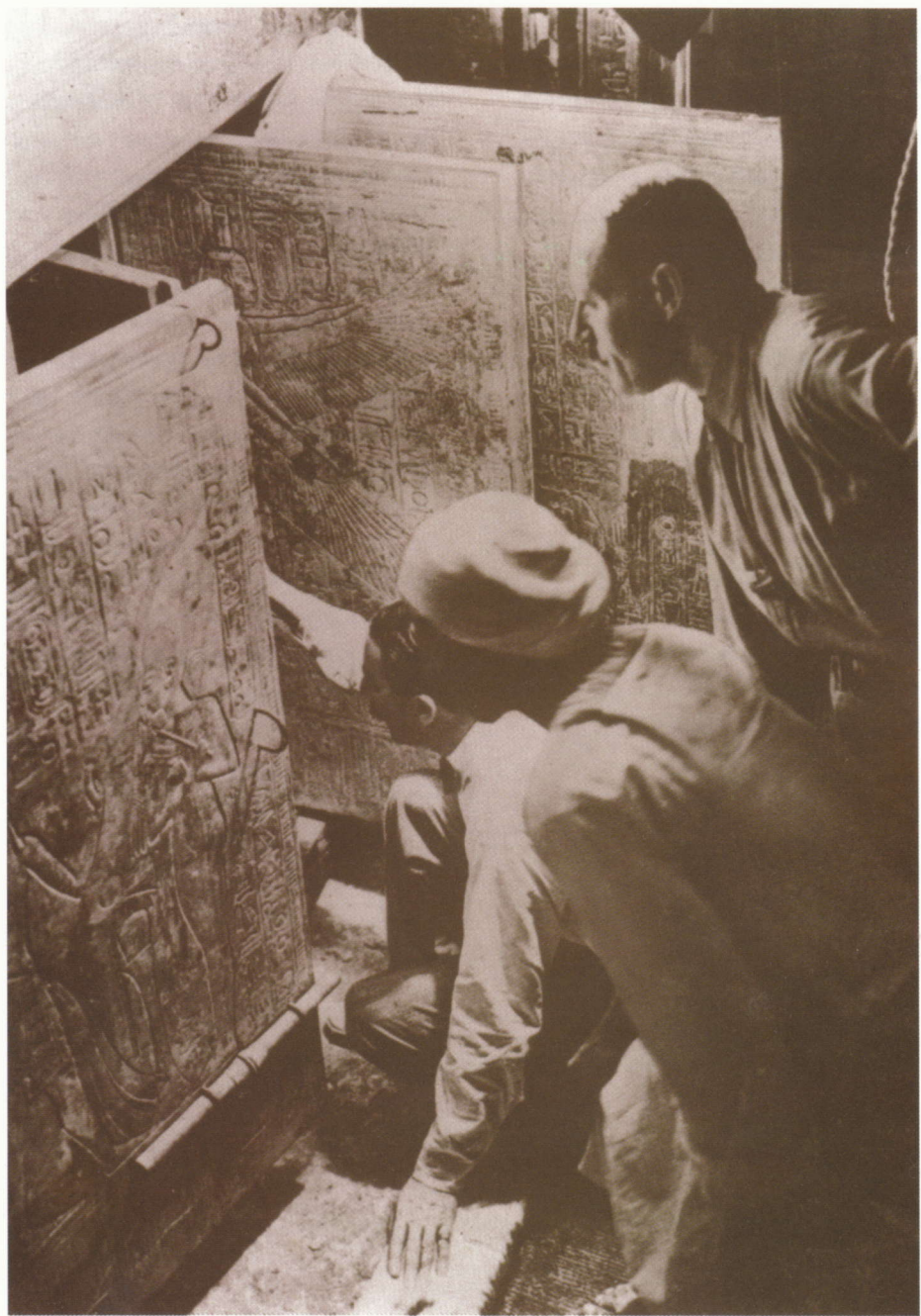


romantic vision of the grandeur of the Kingdom of the Pharaohs, this was an essential scene, in which all the elements of ancient Egyptian greatness could be paraded in a monumental setting with glittering ceremonial and a vast panoply of musical effect. For Verdi, however, once he had worked himself into his subject, the archaeological trappings began to assume less importance, and became simply a

background against which he was able to concentrate on the human situations which were the real stuff of the drama. (As he said in another context: 'To copy reality can be a good thing, but to invent reality is better, much better'). Nevertheless, he had recognised from the beginning that this was a work which, if it was to live up to the spirit of its commission, must be 'of vast proportions, as if it were for that great barn of an opera house in Paris', and there is no doubt that the whole musical and scenic conception of *Aida* owed a lot to the traditions of Parisian Grand Opéra.

Paris, with its sophisticated, cosmopolitan attitude to music and the theatre, was the recognised operatic centre of Europe, the magnet which attracted all the major nineteenth-century opera composers at some time or other, not always with the happiest results. Verdi had twice attempted a work there on the grandiose scale demanded by French operatic taste, but *Les vêpres siciliennes*, in 1855, was dogged by libretto trouble, production difficulties and recurring threats of cancellation, and even *Don Carlos*, for all its great qualities, had somehow missed a real success. Verdi had therefore already decided that he would not again write an opera for the 'Grande Boutique'. But however unsatisfactory his personal experience in Paris may have been, he was far too good a





composer not to have gained some positive advantage from the French connection, and what in fact emerged in *Aida* was a Grand Opéra with some of the attributes of its Parisian model but without the complexities and conventions that were the bugbear of the Parisian style.

To a great extent this was due to the simplicity of the plot. The story of *Aida* is far more direct and single-minded than the complicated series of episodes and characters which make up the libretto of *Don Carlos* - indeed, it has often been criticised for going too far in the opposite direction. But the change was deliberate, and the result a quicker, clearer and more continuous articulation

of the drama, and a more immediate identification with the characters and their feelings. At first glance it may seem that this is confined to the more intimate, personal episodes of the opera: the first scene of Act Two, the Nile Scene, or the final duet. But this is not really the case. The same consistency of dramatic intention lies behind the big spectacles, into which the dramatic conflict is woven with unfailing care and consistency. Take the Triumph Scene again: as spectacle it is magnificent, and perfectly adapted both to the occasion for which it was written and to its position in the opera. It is the kind of thing the Meyerbeer did, only not quite so well. But its very success in these respects has tended to obscure not only



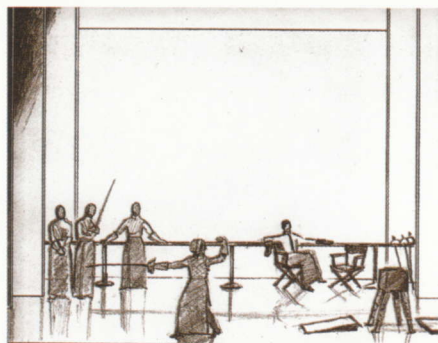


its extraordinary melodic vitality and cumulative musical invention (Meyerbeer, in all his glory, never came near to this), but also its place in the drama. And the crucial dramatic point on which the Triumph Scene turns is the entry of Amonasro, father of Aida and King of the defeated Ethiopian people.

Amonasro is patriotism incarnate, and it is only with his appearance on the scene that we realise that patriotism is really what *Aida* is about. All his life, Verdi had been a passionate supporter of the cause of Italian nationalism: the success of *Nabucco* and overwhelming popular reaction to the chorus 'Va pensiero' were only the first indications of a vein of patriotic sentiment which burst out again and again in his earlier operas and made him, as his fame increased, into one of the figureheads of the Risorgimento. By the time *Aida* was written the situation had naturally moved with the years. Verdi was a national figure, a great admirer of Cavour, and after the unification of Italy under Victor Emanuel II of Piedmont in 1861 he had been persuaded, much against his will, to act as a deputy in the first Italian parliament. But the role never suited him, and his political views remained always instinctive and human, rather than in any way professional. And so in *Aida*, where the conflict is between Radamès's love for Aida and love for his country on the one hand, and Aida's similar emotional struggle on

the other, the question is: whose side was Verdi really on?

From one point of view it is easy enough to see the tremendous parade of ancient Egyptian nationalism which runs through the earlier scenes of the opera as a very thinly disguised celebration of the spirit of the new Italy. The setting and subject of the Triumph Scene may be Egyptian, its theatrical conception



Parisian, but its musical content remains obstinately Italian and the Grand March, for all those gorgeous 'Egyptian' trumpets which Verdi invented specially for the occasion, would be (and frequently have been) perfectly at home in the piazzas of Rome, Milan or Turin. The nobility of the King and the repressive conservatism of the High Priest are absolutely in line with such a view – indeed the sanctimonious attitude of the priesthood is a specially Veridian touch. He wrote to Ghislanzoni about a point in the libretto for this scene: 'You must alter the first eight lines of the chorus and add eight more for the priests to the effect that "we have



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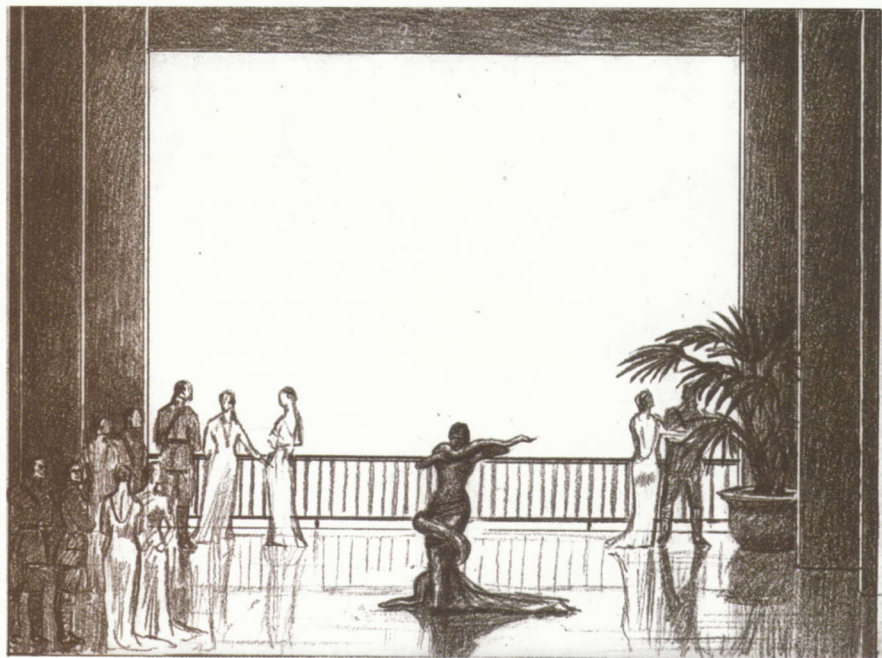
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conquered with the help of divine providence. The enemy is delivered into our hands. God is henceforward on our side". (See King William's telegram). The reference is, of course, to the famous message sent by the King Of Prussia to his queen after the victory of Sedan, news of which reached Italy as the Triumph Scene was being written. Although it didn't work out quite as blatantly as that in the final libretto, it is amusing to see the words of the German king being attributed to the priests rather than to the titular head of ancient Egypt. To Italians of Verdi's generation France had always been considered the natural ally of Italy, and when the Franco-Prussian war broke out in 1870 Verdi's sympathies were with the French: in

spite of his distrust of Napoleon III, he saw a powerful German Empire united under the iron control of Bismarck as just as serious a threat to Europe and Italy as ever Austria had been, and it is characteristic that he should have identified this aspect of European politics with the group that, in his own country, he had always seen as the main opponent of Italian progress.

Nevertheless, whatever the implications of Egyptian nationalism as an allegory of the contemporary situation in Italy, there is no doubt that the true drama of *Aida* originates in quite another quarter. To this drama the display of Egyptian power and state consciousness is an essential adjunct, because it gives concrete visual

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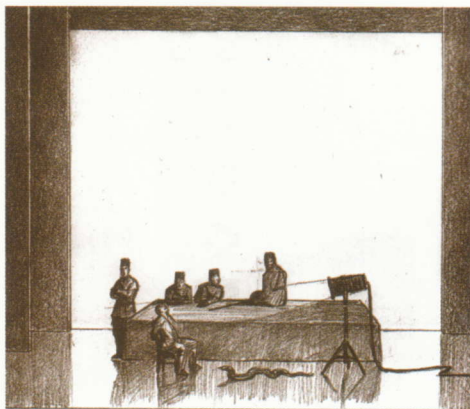


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expression to one side of Radamès's predicament. But the entry of Amonasro makes it perfectly clear where Verdi's sympathies lie: whatever the musical seductions of Pharaonic grandeur, the emotional impetus of the opera comes from Ethiopia, and its ultimate protagonist is not Radamès, or Amneris, or Ramphis, or the King but Aida herself. In the end, Verdi was nearly always on the side of the underdog: 'Va pensiero' is the song of the underdog in exile, and the patriotic nostalgia of the Jews during the Babylonian captivity is not much different in kind from the patriotic nostalgia of Aida and Amonasro in Egyptian servitude. In the days of *Nabucco*, Italy was herself the underdog: by the time of *Aida*, however, the new Italian state no longer saw itself like that and Verdi, who was proud of his country and its achievement, was prepared to celebrate the new spirit. Yet – Bismarck, Napoleon III, wars and aggression and displays of strength – these were manifestations of a national obsessiveness that were a far cry from the human patriotism of the Risorgimento, and so there is in *Aida* a confusion of patriotic feeling, a double tug at the national heart strings, which reflects something very real in Verdi's state of mind and provides at the same time the background, and even to some extent the motivation, for Radamès's tragic dilemma.

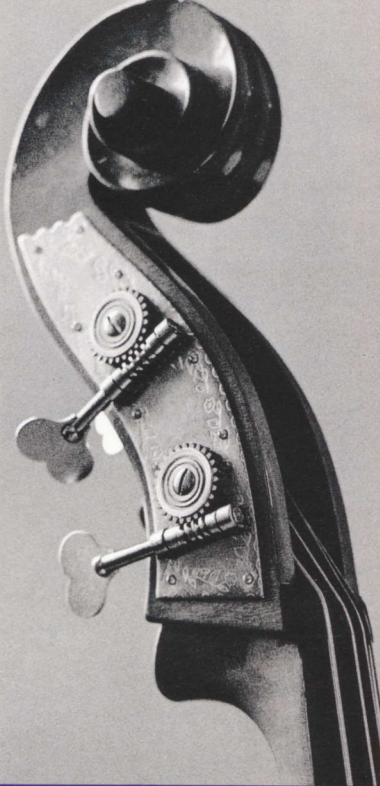
Now in all this there is, in the end, very little that is Egyptian and not much that

is French. Yet there is a lot that is Italian, and not only from a political point of view. All through the opera, and in the last scenes particularly, there is a concentration on the direct dramatic impact of the singing line that is profoundly Italian. Verdi refines yet again on the continuity of musical texture which he has been developing ever since *Rigoletto*, through *Simon Boccanegra*, *Un ballo in maschera*, *La forza del destino* and even *Don Carlos*, but here the simplicity of the story allows him to bring together all his mature experience, the Parisian part not forgotten, in a parallel simplicity of



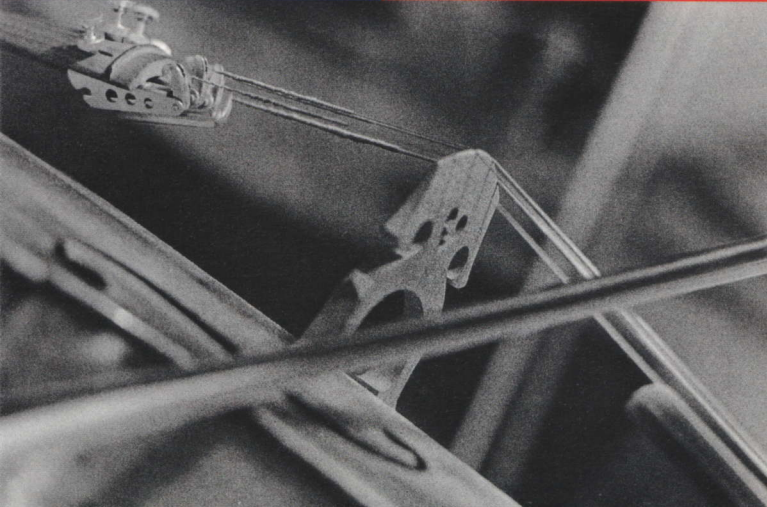
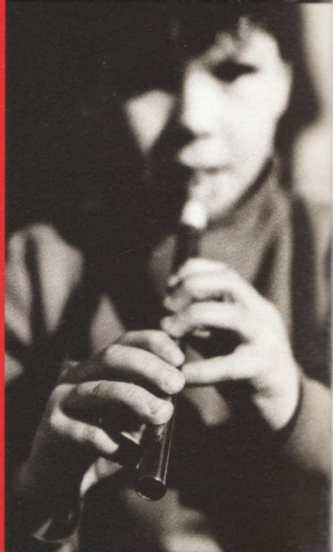
human dramatic treatment. His letters to Ghislanzoni are filled with warnings to write directly, naturally, without the clichés of the typical opera libretto, with an overall result that is poles apart from the elaborate theatricality of the Parisian manner and the novelty-seeking ingenuities of Meyerbeerian Grand Opéra.

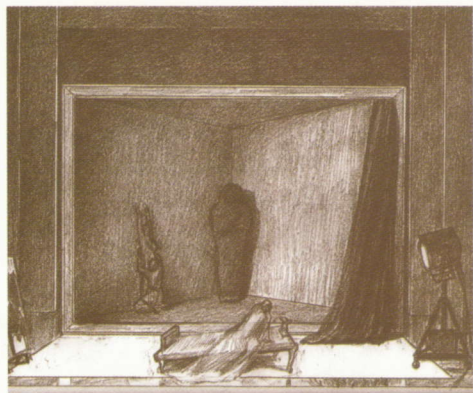




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In a letter to Du Locle, written after the production of *Don Carlos*, Verdi had expressed his feelings as an Italian composer in Paris: 'In your musical theatre there are too many connoisseurs! Everybody wants to judge for himself, according to his own tastes and, what is worse, according to a system, without taking account of the character and individuality of the composer. Everyone wants to give an opinion, express a doubt, and a composer, living for long in this atmosphere of uncertainty, can hardly help being shaken in his convictions and ends by correcting and adjusting, which really means spoiling his work. In this way the final product is never an opera created in a single jet, but a mosaic - as beautiful as you like, but still a mosaic.'

It is because *Aida*, for all its monumental framework and archaeological paraphernalia, is fundamentally an opera 'created in a single jet' that it has outlived, and will continue to outlive, so

many of its Grand Operatic fellows. For all the refinement of method and richness of musical idiom, it is an opera in the same tradition as *Nabucco* or *Trovatore*, transformed by a master into something which takes it even beyond a narrow national idiom and into a world of its own. 'I believe in inspiration, you believe in construction', he wrote in the same letter; 'I want the enthusiasm that you lack, both in feeling and judgement ... For me, true success is not possible unless I write as I feel, free from any outside influence whatever, without thinking whether I write for Paris or for the moon...'

*Aida* a lunar opera? That would perhaps be going too far. But to let it get stuck at the Egyptian level is certainly not going far enough.

Michael Rose

(Published in *ENO Opera Guide No 2, 1980*)

Illustrations:

*Bruno Swengl's set designs for Aida 2000*

*Photographs of 1920s' Egyptian archeological finds.*





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## BIOGRAPHIES



**GEORGINA BENZA** Soprano (Hungary) Aida  
Georgina Benza studied in Kiev and Budapest. A winner of the Belvedere and Salzburg Mozart competitions, she also won the special Giulietta Simionato Prize in Budapest. She was a member of the Gelsenkirchen Opera before moving to Opera Wiesbaden as a lyric soprano soloist. Since 1989 she has also been a permanent member of the Bayerische Staatsoper in Munich, where she specialises in the *lirico-spinto* repertoire. Her roles in this *fach* include Verdi's Abigail, Violetta, Amelia, Aida and Desdemona; Tchaikovsky's Tatyana; and Puccini's Suor Angelica. For the past eight years she has studied all her dramatic roles with Renata Scotto. Guest appearances include Strauss's Sophie and Donizetti's Adina in Berlin; Mimi in Frankfurt, Copenhagen, Dresden and Barcelona; and various roles in Budapest, Leipzig and Bonn. She has sung Tosca in the beautiful Teatro Amazonas in Manaus, Brazil; and other recent engagements include Aida in Erfurt; Tosca, Mimi and the *Trovatore* Leonora in Graz; her first Butterfly in Augsburg and Graz; Mimi at Opéra de Massy; and Elisabetta in *Don Carlos* in St Gallen.

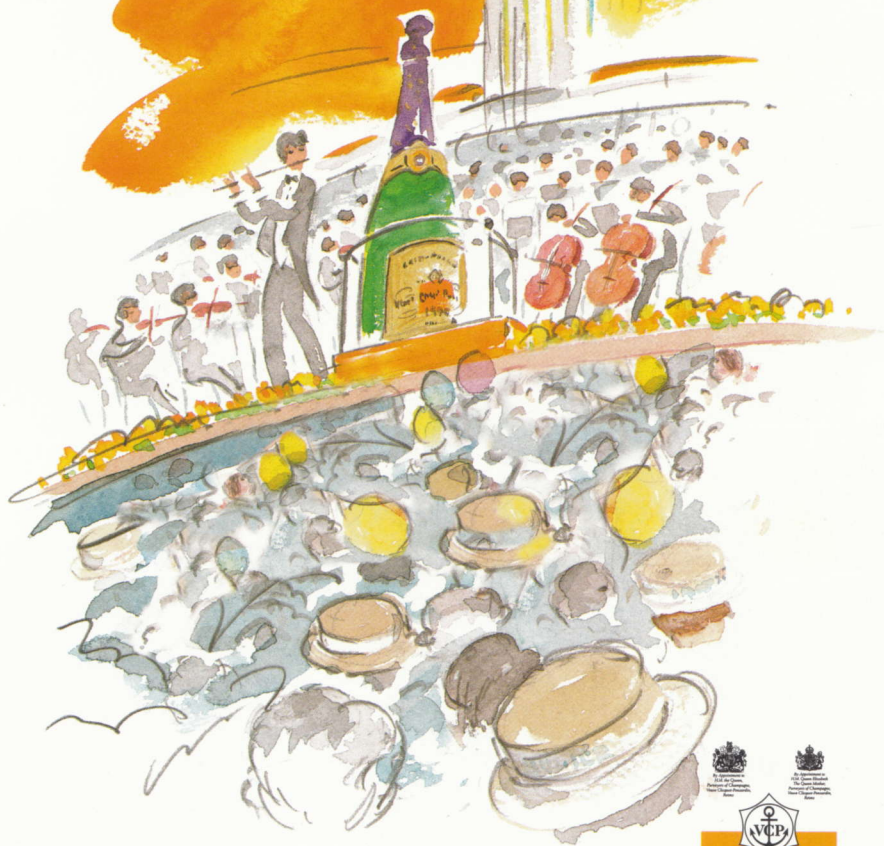


**JEAN-JACQUES CUBAYNES** Bass (France) King  
Jean-Jacques Cubaynes was born in Toulouse, where he began his singing studies and received a Doctorate in Chemistry at the University. After studying at the Opéra Studio de Paris he made his debut at the Toulouse Capitole in 1978 and then sang in other French theatres as Basilio, Colline, Don Giovanni, Méfistophélès, Arkel, Banquo, Sarastro and Don Quichotte. For Opera Ireland he has sung Angelotti, the Commendatore and Crespel; he has also sung in Belgium, Germany and Spain as well as at Bregenz Festival. In 1987 he made his Paris Opéra debut as Mozart's Publio and Voice of Neptune under Hogwood. In 1991 he sang the Old Hebrew in *Samson et Dalila* under Chung at the Bastille, where he also appeared in *Ballo*, *Carmen* and Messiaen's *Saint François d'Assise*. Other operas in his repertoire include *Aida*, *Salome*, *Mignon*, *Der Rosenkavalier*, *Guillaume Tell* and Shostakovich's *Lady Macbeth of Mzensk*. On CD he sings in EMI's recordings of Gounod's *Mireille* and Roussel's *Padmavati*, both under Plasson.



**KEVIN FERGUSON** Tenor (UK) Messenger  
Kevin Ferguson began his musical studies as an oboist and a composer. His compositions have been performed by the London Symphony Orchestra and members of the London Sinfonietta. As a singer, he studied at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester with Patrick McGuigan and, later, with Robert Alderson. While at college he took part in many opera productions, including Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* as well as *La Bobème* and *Carmen*. Since then he has worked extensively as a chorister with Opera Ireland, Scottish Opera and at Wexford Festival. His roles in the Wexford Opera Scenes include Eisenstein in *Die Fledermaus*, Dancairo in *Carmen* and Mack the Knife in last year's acclaimed production of Weill's *Threepenny Opera*. Future plans include a return to Wexford in Zandonai's *Conchita* and further work with Scottish Opera and the Royal Opera Covent Garden. He is presently studying with Robert Dean.

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### MAIRÉAD HURLEY (Ireland) Répétiteur

Mairéad Hurley studied under Rhona Marshall at the Royal Irish Academy of Music in Dublin as well as at UCD and at the National Opera Studio in London. Currently working as répétiteur at the DIT Conservatory of Music and Drama, she has performed extensively throughout Ireland and the UK as recitalist, accompanist and répétiteur. For Opera Ireland, Mairéad has been répétiteur for *La Bohème*, *Macbeth*, *The Gypsy Baron*, *The Merry Widow*, *Les contes d'Hoffmann*, *Die Fledermaus* and *La traviata* and *The barber of Seville*. She has also worked with Opera Touring Company, Opera Northern Ireland and the RTÉ Proms. Three years ago she toured Northern Ireland with ONI's *The World of Opera* and she has since worked on that company's *Madama Butterfly*, *Idomeneo*, *Hansel and Gretel*, *The Magic Flute* and *Fidelio*.

### EMIL IVANOV Tenor (Bulgaria) Radamès

Emil Ivanov was born in Rome of Bulgarian parents and studied singing at the Music Academy in Sofia. His international career started in 1986 after he had won third prize at the Belvedere Competition in Vienna. He has appeared at La Scala Milan, Bologna, Rome, Amsterdam, Stuttgart, Antwerp, Cologne and the New York Metropolitan as well as at the Festivals in Verona, Macerata and Bregenz under such famous conductors as Abbado, Prêtre, Guadagno, Santi, Viotti and Kuhn. He has been a soloist at the Vienna State Opera since 1990. Emil Ivanov speaks fluent German, French, English, Italian and Russian and his operatic repertoire includes roles in most of those languages. In the current season at Saint-Etienne he has sung Alim in Massenet's *Le Roi de Lahore* and Don José in *Carmen*. Future plans include *Aida* and *Ballo* in Cairo; *Aida* in Essen; *Les Vêpres Siciliennes* in St Gallen, *Don Carlos* at Toulon and *Roma* at the Massenet Festival in Saint-Etienne.

### DIETER KAEGI (Switzerland) Director

Dieter Kaegi, who is Artistic Director of Opera Ireland, has previously directed *Martba*, *Così fan tutte*, *Macbeth*, *Falstaff*, *Cavalleria rusticana* and *Pagliacci* for the company. Born in Zurich, he studied Musicology and German Literature there and in Paris before making his professional debut as an assistant director with English National Opera in 1980. He held similar posts in Zurich and Düsseldorf before becoming Director of Productions at the Aix-en-Provence Festival in 1989. He has also worked as a director throughout Europe and the USA. His recent productions include *Der Rosenkavalier* and *Der Freischütz* in Seattle; *Tristan und Isolde* in Monte Carlo; *Fidelio*, *Idomeneo* and *Le nozze di Figaro* in Copenhagen; *Die fliegende Holländer*, *Guillaume Tell* and *Fidelio* in Liège; *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* and *Roméo et Juliette* in Geneva and Houston; *Rigoletto* in Orange; *Anna Bolena* in Metz; *Die lustige Witwe*, Offenbach's *Barbe-Bleue*, Bartók's *Bluebeard's Castle* and Martinu's *Ariane* in Strasbourg. Future plans include *La fille du régiment* in St Gallen; *The Golden Cockrel* in Perm, Siberia; and *I vespri siciliani* in Lübeck.





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### NICOLAS MARTY (France) Assistant Director

Nicolas Marty grew up in the south of France before moving to Paris, where he now lives. He has studied and trained in various forms of theatre, including acting, music and the art of circus. He also studied singing with the celebrated French soprano Renée Doria, who introduced him to the world of opera. During these years, he worked as an actor with the Paris Opéra at the Bastille and the Palais Garnier. Nicolas Marty decided to move into opera production four years ago and has since worked throughout France assisting such directors as Pierre Constant, Denis Krief, Alain Garichot, Dieter Kaegi and Richard Jones. He was Bob Wilson's assistant for Gluck's *Alceste* and *Orphée* at the re-opening of the Châtelet last autumn and is now based at Paris Opéra as assistant director and stage manager. He was Joël Lauwers' assistant for his productions of *The Tales of Hoffmann* and *Salome* for Opera Ireland.

### LIZ ROCHE (Ireland) Choreographer

Born in Dublin in 1975, Liz Roche is a graduate of the London Contemporary Dance School. During the past six years she has choreographed for Scottish Dance Theatre, Cois Ceim, Dance Theatre Ireland, In Transit and CCN de Caen in France. In 1996 she won 'Choreographer of the Year' and an award for 'Dance Show of the Year' from *The Irish Times*. As a dancer, Liz Roche has performed with all the major Irish dance companies and abroad with Cie La Camionetta and Les Carnets Bagouet in France, and Cie Christine Gaigg in Vienna. She established Rex Levitates in 1999 and has created *Peeling Venus* (Diversions Temple bar) and *Interrupted Light* (Aerowaves Platform) for the company. In 1998 she was awarded a place on the Gulbenkian ICPC directed by Jonathan Burrows and Kevin Volans and she is a joint-winner of the Peter Darrell Choreographic Award 2000.

### CLAUDE SCHNITZLER (France) Conductor

Born in Strasbourg, Claude Schnitzler studied organ, harpsicord, conducting and composition before specialising in conducting at the Mozarteum in Salzburg. He began as a vocal coach with Opéra du Rhin and became assistant to Alain Lombard at the Orchestre Philharmonique de Strasbourg. He conducted opera and ballet regularly at the Opéra National de Paris in the period 1981-1985. While continuing to conduct at Opéra du Rhin, he became Director of Orchestre de la Ville de Rennes in 1986. Until 1995 he directed the Orchestre de Bretagne and also made guest appearances with other main French orchestras and in various foreign theatres. Equally at home in traditional and contemporary repertoire, he has conducted an eclectic mix of symphonic and operatic music from early times to Britten's *Owen Wingrave* and the world premiere of Jean Prodromidès's *Goya*. He conducted *The Tales of Hoffmann* for Opera Ireland in 1998 and Goldmark's *Die Königen von Saba* at last year's Wexford Festival. Other recent operatic projects included *Siegfried* and *Götterdämmerung* in Marseille; and *Lakmé* for Tours Opéra.



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### BRUNO SCHWENGL (Austria) Designer

Bruno Schwengl was educated as a graphic artist and a theatrical set and costume designer. He works internationally in opera and ballet. In Ireland he has worked at Wexford Festival (*Cherevichki* and *Das Liebesverbot*), with Storey Tellers and at Dublin's Gate Theatre, for which his designs have included *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, *A Tale of Two Cities*, *Lady Windermere's Fan*, *Cyrano de Bergerac* and *As You Like It*. For Opera Ireland he designed *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Martba*, *Così fan tutte*, *Macbeth*, *Eugene Onegin*, *The Merry Widow* and *Cavalleria rusticana & Pagliacci*.

### ADAM SILVERMAN (USA) Lighting Designer

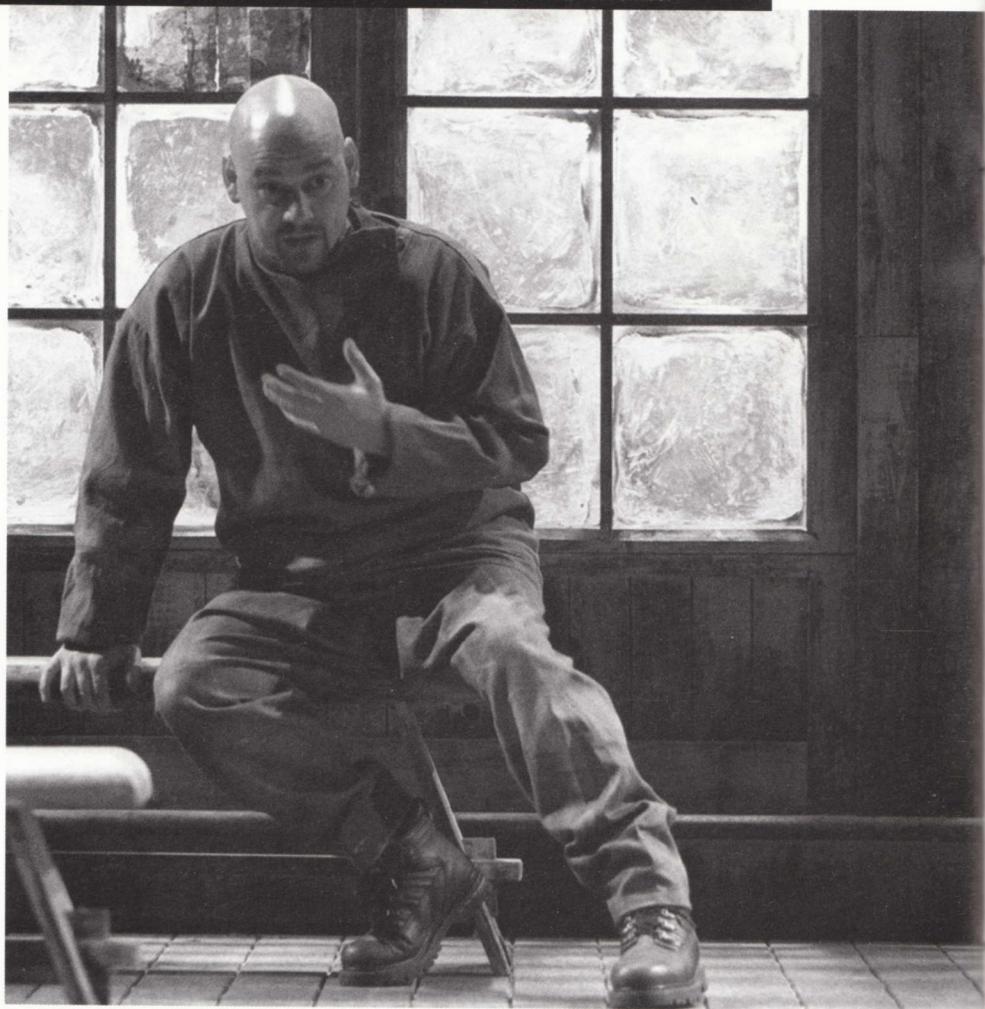
Adam Silverman's opera credits include *Macbeth*, *Eugene Onegin*, *Merry Widow*, *Die Fledermaus* and *Cav&Pag* for Opera Ireland; *Giasone* directed by David Alden at Spoleto Festival, USA; *La traviata* directed by Christopher Alden for New Israeli Opera; *Der Rosenkavalier* directed by Kaegi in Seattle; *Faust* at Welsh National Opera; *L'etoile* at Opera Zuid, the Netherlands; *Il turco in Italia*, *Boris Godunov*, *House of the Dead* and *Wozzeck* for Long Beach Opera; *La colombe* for L'Opéra Français de New York; *Il re pastore* and *Lucia* for Boston Lyric Opera. Adam Silverman's theatre credits include *Bartholomew Fair* for the Royal Shakespeare Company; *As You Like It* for Shakespeare Theatre Washington; Lawrence Boswell's production of *Beauty and the Beast* and David Lan's *'Tis a Pity She's a Whore* at London's Young Vic; *A Tale of Two Cities* and *Cyrano de Bergerac* directed by Alan Stanford at Dublin's Gate Theatre; Elane May and Alan Arkin's *Power Plays* (Promenade, NY) and *Cider House Rules* (Atlantic, NY).

### PATRICIA SPENCE Mezzo-soprano (USA) Amneris

Patricia Spence made her debut at San Francisco Opera as Anna in *L'Africaine*; at New York City Opera as Rosina; and at Opera Colorado as Mistress Quickly. Her European debut was at Verona as Edwige in *Guillaume Tell*: she then sang Malcolm in *La donna del lago* under Muti at La Scala, where she also sang in *Maometto II* and the title role in *Tancredi*. Elsewhere, she has appeared in Washington, Marseilles, Trieste, Bologna and Rome as well as at the festivals in Sao Paolo, Santa Fe, Pesaro and Halle, where her roles have included Rossini's Isabella, Cenerentola and Edoardo (*Mathilde de Saba*); Ino and Juno in Handel's *Semele*; Britten's Mrs Grose; and the title role in Handel's *Poro*. Recent engagements include Erda in Wagner's *Ring* at Marseilles, Brangane in Genoa and Margarthe in Schumann's *Genoveva* in Leipzig and Vienna. Patricia Spence also works regularly in baroque music, mainly with Nicholas McGegan, with whom she has recorded Handel's *La resurrezione*, *Messiah* and *Ottone*. Other CDs include Bernstein's *Songfest* and Flora in *La traviata*.

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## BIOGRAPHIES

### BARSEG TUMANYAN Bass (Armenia) Ramphis

Born in 1958, Barseg Tumanyan studied at the Komitas Conservatoire in his native Yerevan and joined the Spendarian Opera there in 1980. He later studied at La Scala, Milan, and under Yevgeny Nesterenko in Moscow. He made his Covent Garden debut in the gala concert for the Armenian Earthquake in 1989 and his Wigmore concert debut a year later. 1990 was also the year in which he made a sensational Australian debut as Gounod's *Méphistophélès* in Melbourne, where he has since sung Verdi's Philip II. *Méphistophélès* was also the role of his Paris debut, while Germany first heard him as Boris Godunov at Munich State Opera. He has also sung to high acclaim in Hamburg, Vienna, Bonn, Amsterdam, Marseilles, Lyon, Cagliari, Buenos Aires, Montreal Boston, Los Angeles, Washington and the New York Metropolitan. His repertoire includes most of the important Italian bass roles, particularly the Verdi ones, and he has also sung in *Rachmaninov's Francesca da Rimini* (under Askenazy) and Tchaikovsky's *Cherevichki*.

### MARCEL VANAUD Baritone (Belgium) Amonasro

After winning an important singing prize at Brussels Conservatoire, Marcel Vanaud continued his studies in Liège. He sang for seven years with Opéra de Wallonie before Gerard Mortier took him to the Monnaie in Brussels where he sang in the three Mozart/DaPonte operas. This was the start of an international career during which he has appeared in opera houses all over mainland Europe as well as in North and South America. His repertoire includes the main French *bariton-Martin* roles as well as the important Verdi and other Italian baritone parts. He has also sung in the premiere of Manzoni's *Dr Faustus* at La Scala (his debut in 1998), and in Hindemith's *Cardillac*, von Einem's *Dantons Tod* and Stravinsky's *Oedipus Rex*. Among future engagements are *Tbais* and *Simon Boccanegra* in Toulon; *Rigoletto* in St Etienne; *La traviata*, *Andrea Chenier* and *Der fliegende Holländer* in Liège. His recordings include a recital of Verdi arias and the role of Vitellius on EMI's CD set of *Hérodiade* under Plasson.

### ELIZABETH WOODS Soprano (Ireland) Priestess

Elizabeth Woods studied French, Spanish and International Marketing at DCU before pursuing her singing studies in Milan, courtesy of a bursary from the Italian Cultural Institute. In Ireland she studied with Evelyn Dowling. She also obtained a diploma in acting at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama and took masterclasses at the Britten-Pears School for Advanced Musical Studies. She spent two years with the Opera Ireland Chorus and sang leads in the Wexford Opera Scenes where her roles were Sophie in *Werther* and Adele in *Die Fledermaus*. She was awarded Wexford's first Gerard Arnhold Bursary in 1998 and returned last year as Czesnikowa in Moniuszko's *Straszny Dwór*. Elizabeth Woods has given recitals at the National Gallery of Ireland and has appeared as soprano soloist in Handel's *Messiah* and *Saul*. Future engagements include a recital for Friends of Wexford Festival at the RDS and the role of Adina in OTC's tour of Donizetti's *L'elisir d'amore*. Miss Woods would like to acknowledge the generous support of Guinness and Mahon.





# THE NATIONAL CHAMBER CHOIR

The *National Chamber Choir*, which forms the core of Opera Ireland's Chorus, is one of Ireland's premier chamber music ensembles. The Choir gives upwards of 60 live performances annually. Founded in 1991 it is made up of 17, highly motivated, professional singers. When not working as an opera chorus the NCC, working from its base in Dublin City University, is employed all year round in both entertainment and education, giving concerts and education workshops in Dublin and throughout the country.

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The National Chamber Choir will be Choir in Residence at the International Choral Festival in Cork where it will premiere works by Ian Wilson and Mícheál Ó Súilleabháin.

### **1 June: The Shaw Room, The National Gallery of Ireland, 6.30 pm** *Composers Under the Influence*

The first concert in the NCC's summer series in the NGI – this concert features composer David Fennessy and composers that have influenced his choral writing.

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## BIOGRAPHIES

**CATHAL GARVEY** (Ireland) Chorus Master/Asst. Conductor  
Cathal Garvey, whose chorus direction for Opera Ireland's *Boris Godunov* was widely acclaimed, began violin and piano studies at the age of eight. He continued at the Cork School of Music and later read Music at UCC. He then spent two years studying at the College of Moscow Conservatory and, upon his return to Ireland, completed a Masters Degree in Conducting. He has also attended conducting masterclasses with Gerhard Markson and George Hurst. As a violinist and singer, Cathal Garvey has performed and toured extensively with the National Symphony Orchestra, the National Youth Orchestra, the Irish Youth Choir and Madrigal '75. As a conductor he has worked with several choirs and orchestras in Cork and from 1997 was Chorus Master and Assistant Conductor for Opera South in Cork, working on productions of *La Bobème* and *Il trovatore*. Last year he conducted Irish Operatic Repertory Company's successful run of Noël Gay's *Me and My Girl* at the Cork Opera House and Dublin's Olympia Theatre.

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Dates indicate the first and most recent productions.

<b>Salvatore Allegra</b>		<b>Christoph W Gluck</b>		<b>Licinio Refice</b>	
Ave Maria	1959	Orfeo ed Euridice	1960, 1986	Cecilia	1954
Il medico suo malgrado	1962			<b>Gioacchino Rossini</b>	
<b>Michael W Balfe</b>		<b>Charles Gounod</b>		Il barbiere di Siviglia	1942, 1999
The Bohemian Girl	1943	Faust	1941, 1995	La Cenerentola	1972, 1995
		Roméo et Juliette	1945	L'italiana in Algeri	1978, 1992
<b>Ludwig van Beethoven</b>		<b>George F Handel</b>		<b>Camille Saint-Saëns</b>	
Fidelio	1954, 1994	Messiah	1942	Samson et Dalila	1942, 1979
<b>Vincenzo Bellini</b>		<b>Engelbert Humperdinck</b>		<b>Bedřich Smetana</b>	
La sonnambula	1960, 1963	Hänsel und Gretel	1943, 1994	The Bartered Bride	1953, 1976
Norma	1955, 1989			<b>Johann Strauss</b>	
I puritani	1975	<b>Leos Janáček</b>		Die Fledermaus	1962, 1998
<b>Benjamin Britten</b>		Jenufa	1973	Der Zigeunerbaron	1964
Peter Grimes	1990	Katya Kabanova	2000		
<b>Georges Bizet</b>		<b>Franz Lehár</b>		<b>Richard Strauss</b>	
Carmen	1941, 1989	The Merry Widow	1997	Der Rosenkavalier	1964, 1984
Les pêcheurs de perles	1964, 1987			Salome	1999
<b>Gustave Charpentier</b>		<b>Ruggiero Leoncavallo</b>		<b>Ambroise Thomas</b>	
Louise	1979	Pagliacci	1941, 1998	Mignon	1966, 1973
<b>Francesco Cilea</b>		<b>Pietro Mascagni</b>		<b>Peter Ilich Tchaikovsky</b>	
Adriana Lecouvreur	1967, 1980	L'amico Fritz	1952	Eugene Onegin	1969, 1997
<b>Domenico Cimarosa</b>		Cavalleria rusticana	1941, 1998	The Queen of Spades	1972
Il matrimonio segreto	1961			<b>Giuseppe Verdi</b>	
<b>Claude Debussy</b>		<b>Jules Massenet</b>		Aida	1942, 2000
Pelléas et Mélisande	1948	Manon	1952, 1980	Un ballo in maschera	1949, 1992
<b>Léo Delibes</b>		Werther	1967, 1977	Don Carlos	1950, 1985
Lakmé	1993			Ernani	1965, 1978
<b>Gaetano Donizetti</b>		<b>Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart</b>		Falstaff	1960, 1998
Don Pasquale	1952, 1987	Così fan tutte	1950, 1993	La forza del destino	1951, 1973
L'elisir d'amore	1958, 1996	Don Giovanni	1943, 1995	Macbeth	1963, 1997
La favorita	1942, 1982	Idomeneo	1956	Nabucco	1962, 1986
La figlia del reggimento	1978	Die Entführung aus dem Serail	1949, 1964	Otello	1946, 1981
Lucia di Lammermoor	1955, 1991	Le nozze di Figaro	1942, 1997	Rigoletto	1941, 1994
<b>Friedrich von Flotow</b>		Die Zauberflöte	1990, 1996	Simon Boccanegra	1956, 1974
Martha	1982, 1992	<b>Modest Mussorgsky</b>		La traviata	1941, 1999
<b>Umberto Giordano</b>		Boris Godunov	1999	Il trovatore	1941, 1995
Andrea Chénier	1957, 1983	<b>Jacques Offenbach</b>		<b>Gerard Victory</b>	
Fedora	1959	Les contes d'Hoffmann	1945, 1998	Music Hath Mischief	1968
		<b>Amilcare Ponchielli</b>		<b>Richard Wagner</b>	
		La Gioconda	1944, 1984	Der fliegende Holländer	1946, 1964
		<b>Giacomo Puccini</b>		Lohengrin	1971, 1983
		La Bohème	1941, 1996	Tannhäuser	1943, 1977
		Gianni Schicchi	1962	Tristan und Isolde	1953, 1963
		Madama Butterfly	1942, 1993	Die Walküre	1956
		Manon Lescaut	1958, 1991		
		Suor Angelica	1962		
		Tosca	1941, 1996		
		Turandot	1957, 1986	<b>Ermanno Wolf-Ferrari</b>	
				Il segreto di Susanna	1956



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presents

*Les Liaisons Dangereuses*

By Christopher Hampton

Winner of 5 Best Play Awards

Starring Siobhán Redmond, Clive Wood, Dulcie Gray and Sophie Ward.

25th – 29th April

### Noel Pearson

presents

Stephen Rea in Sean O'Casey's

*The Plough and the Stars*

Previews from 4th May, Opens 8th May – 3rd June 2000

### The Anna Livia International Opera Festival

*La Rondine (The Swallow)* by Puccini

*Hérodiade* by Massenet

16th – 25th June

### Druid Theatre Company and the Royal Court Theatre

present

Martin McDonagh's Tony Award-Winning

*The Beauty Queen of Leenane*

Directed by Garry Hynes

Starring Anna Manahan, Marie Mullen, Peter Gowen and Ruaidhrí Conroy.

From the 17th July for a limited run only.



**Can't sing.  
Can't dance.  
But he sure can go a long way.**



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